

of this century of the life sciences for all our citizens is as worthy as any in American history.

I urge my colleagues to make good on the promise of America, and see that all our citizens receive the quality health care that should be their birthright. I urge the Senate to support Medicare for All.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 359—CONCERNING THE GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA'S BAN ON INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS AND THE WELFARE OF ORPHANED OR ABANDONED CHILDREN IN ROMANIA

Ms. LANDRIEU submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

S. RES. 359

Whereas following the execution of Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989, it was discovered that more than 100,000 underfed, neglected children throughout Romania were living in hundreds of squalid and inhumane institutions;

Whereas citizens of the United States responded to the dire situation of these children with an outpouring of compassion and assistance to improve conditions in those institutions and to provide for the needs of abandoned children in Romania;

Whereas, between 1990 and 2004, citizens of the United States adopted more than 8,200 Romanian children, with a similar response from the citizens of Western Europe;

Whereas the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported in March 2005 that more than 9,000 children a year are abandoned in Romania's maternity wards or pediatric hospitals and that child abandonment in Romania in "2003 and 2004 was no different from that occurring 10, 20, or 30 years ago";

Whereas there are approximately 37,000 orphaned or abandoned children in Romania today living in state institutions, an additional 49,000 living in temporary arrangements, such as foster care, and an unknown number of children living on the streets and in maternity and pediatric hospitals;

Whereas, on December 28, 1994, Romania ratified the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption which recognizes that "intercountry adoption may offer the advantage of a permanent family to a child for whom a suitable family cannot be found in his or her State of origin";

Whereas intercountry adoption offers the hope of a permanent family for children who are orphaned or abandoned by their biological parents;

Whereas UNICEF's official position on intercountry adoption, in pertinent part, states: "For children who cannot be raised by their own families, an appropriate alternative family environment should be sought in preference to institutional care, which should be used only as a last resort and as a temporary measure. Intercountry adoption is one of a range of care options which may be open to children, and for individual children who cannot be placed in a permanent family setting in their countries of origin, it may indeed be the best solution. In each case, the best interests of the individual child must be the guiding principal in making a decision regarding adoption.";

Whereas unsubstantiated allegations have been made about the fate of children adopted from Romania and the qualifications and motives of those who adopt internationally;

Whereas in June 2001, the Romanian Adoption Committee imposed a moratorium on intercountry adoption, but continued to accept new intercountry adoption applications and allowed many such applications to be processed under an exception for extraordinary circumstances;

Whereas on June 21, 2004, the Parliament of Romania enacted Law 272/2004 on "the protection and promotion of the rights of the child", which creates new requirements for declaring a child legally available for adoption;

Whereas on June 21, 2004, the Parliament of Romania enacted Law 273/2004 on adoption, which prohibits intercountry adoption except by a child's biological grandparent or grandparents;

Whereas there is no European Union law or regulation restricting intercountry adoptions to biological grandparents or requiring that restrictive laws be passed as a prerequisite for accession to the European Union;

Whereas the number of Romanian children adopted domestically is far less than the number abandoned and has declined further since enactment of Law 272/2004 and 273/2004 due to new, overly burdensome requirements for adoption;

Whereas prior to enactment of Law 273/2004, 211 intercountry adoption cases were pending with the Government of Romania in which children had been matched with adoptive parents in the United States, and approximately 1,500 cases were pending in which children had been matched with prospective parents in Western Europe; and

Whereas the children of Romania, and all children, deserve to be raised in permanent families: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the desire of the Government of Romania to improve the standard of care and well-being of children in Romania;

(2) urges the Government of Romania to complete the processing of the intercountry adoption cases which were pending when Law 273/2004 was enacted;

(3) urges the Government of Romania to amend its child welfare and adoption laws to decrease barriers to adoption, both domestic and intercountry, including by allowing intercountry adoption by persons other than biological grandparents;

(4) urges the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to work collaboratively with the Government of Romania to achieve these ends; and

(5) requests that the European Union and its member states not impede the Government of Romania's efforts to place orphaned or abandoned children in permanent homes in a manner that is consistent with Romania's obligations under the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

SENATE RESOLUTION 360—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 6 THROUGH FEBRUARY 10, 2006, AS "NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK"

Mrs. MURRAY submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 360

Whereas the American School Counselor Association has declared the week of Feb-

ruary 6 through February 10, 2006, as "National School Counseling Week";

Whereas the Senate has recognized the importance of school counseling through the inclusion of elementary and secondary school counseling programs in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;

Whereas school counselors have long advocated that the education system of the United States must leave no child behind and must provide opportunities for every student;

Whereas personal and social growth results in increased academic achievement;

Whereas school counselors help develop well-rounded students by guiding them through their academic, personal, social, and career development;

Whereas school counselors have been instrumental in helping students, teachers, and parents deal with the trauma that was inflicted upon them by hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma;

Whereas students face myriad challenges every day, including peer pressure, depression, and school violence;

Whereas school counselors are usually the only professionals in a school building who are trained in both education and mental health matters;

Whereas the roles and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood, and the school counselor position is often among the first to be eliminated in order to meet budgetary constraints;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school counselors of 478-to-1 is more than double the 250-to-1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association, the American Counseling Association, the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and other organizations; and

Whereas the celebration of National School Counseling Week would increase awareness of the important and necessary role school counselors play in the lives of students in the United States:

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of February 6 through February 10, 2006, as "National School Counseling Week"; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the role school counselors perform in the school and the community at large in preparing students for fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

SENATE RESOLUTION 361—HONORING PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS AND RECOGNIZING THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIETY

Mr. ALLEN (for himself and Mr. STEVENS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 361

Whereas there are over 45,000 professional surveyors in the United States;

Whereas 2006 marks the 200th anniversary of the end of the Lewis and Clark landmark expedition through the upper reaches of the Louisiana Territory and the American West;

Whereas this journey is one of the most important surveying expeditions in the history of the United States because of the wealth of geographical and scientific information it provided about the new Nation;

Whereas the nature of surveying has changed dramatically since 1785, as it is no